Mr. Miller’s English Class

**November 1, 2010**



***Lord of the Flies Book Cover***

**Lord of the Flies Unit**

**W**e will soon be starting our unit on William Golding’s classic novel, *Lord of the Flies*. Our unit question will be: “Are people flawed because society is flawed, or is it the other way around? Is there something wrong with us, and if so, what is it?” As we explore this question vis-à-vis the novel the class will grapple with issues of civilization vs. savagery, the will to power, loss of innocence, and groupthink. We will discuss the themes of the text by juxtaposing them with news articles, artwork (M.C. Escher), and music (Iron Maiden and Disturbed). Students will be asked to think about the text as a cultural artifact written in response to the atrocities of WWII and will consider the parameters of civilization and how quickly and easily our instinct to maintain order disintegrates when all rule of law and subsequent punishment are removed. The unit will culminate in an analytic essay, 3-5 pages, exploring one of the themes outlined above. I understand that these topics are difficult and controversial – as always, I am happy to discuss in conference my unit rational or any concerns you may have. I encourage all parents to sit in on my classes if their time permits and they are so inclined. I look forward to some truly powerful intellectual exploration.

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**Attention Parents!**

- Parents are needed for our upcoming fieldtrip to the Oregon Holocaust Memorial. If interested in accompanying the class, please call the main office or my line directly.

- Midterm grades will be coming out during the next week. Please remember to review the report, sign the bottom confirming you have received it, and send the form back with your student.

**Parent Reminders**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are fast approaching and I encourage all parents to attend if at all possible. This is really a great opportunity for adults to connect and discuss the progress of the student and our goals for the coming year. The school will be providing a continental breakfast, so please attend!



The sign over the entrance to Auschwitz-Birkenau (it reads in German, “Work Makes You Free.”

**Holocaust Unit**

After *Lord of the Flies* we will begin a unit on the Holocaust. The unit, as with *Lord of the Flies*, will address some difficult topics and I encourage you to contact me with any concerns. Like our unit on *Lord of the Flies* we will be exploring man’s proclivity to violence towards and subjugation of his fellow man. In this unit we will be conducting internet research, and watching several films including: “Schindler’s List,” “The Boy in the Striped Pajamas,” and “God on Trial.” Our primary text will be Elie Wiesel’s account of his experience in Auschwitz, *Night*. I hope to take the students on a field trip to the Oregon Holocaust Memorial if time and funding permit. I’m excited to announce that we will be having a guest, herself a survivor of the Holocaust, speak to the class. Students have always responded positively to this experience in the past and I’m sure this year will be no different. I encourage any parents who are interested to attend class that day as I’m sure you will find the experience equally enriching and eye-opening.

**Upcoming events at Century High**

**Nov. 1 - Thanksgiving Food Basket Collection**  
Nov. 1st thru Nov. 24th

**Nov. 5 - Blood Drive**  
in Media Center

**Nov. 7 - Daylight Savings Time Ends**  
Change Those Clocks!

**Nov. 10 - End of 1st Quarter**  
Get That Work In!

**Nov. 11 - No School**  
Veterans’ Day

**Nov. 12 - No School**  
Grade Prep

**Nov. 25 & 26 - No School**  
Thanksgiving

Food for Thought:

"I cannot teach anybody anything; I can only make them think." -- Socrates

"Education would be so much more effective if its purpose were to ensure that by the time they leave school every boy and girl should know how much they don't know, and be imbued with a lifelong desire to know it."   
-- Sir William Haley

“My idea of education is to unsettle the minds of the young and inflame their intellects.”  -- Robert Maynard Hutchins